

# Advance Longmont Report 3: Implementation Plan



Prepared for the City of Longmont, Colorado  
By Avalanche Consulting, Inc.

**DRAFT**

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### **Advance Longmont's Steering Committee members include:**

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Wendi Nafziger, Interim President, Longmont Area Economic Council  
Brad Power, Director of Economic Development, City of Longmont  
Alex Sammoury, Director, Longmont Entrepreneurial Network  
David Starnes, Redevelopment Manager, City of Longmont  
Kathy Weber-Harding, President, Longmont Chamber of Commerce  
Jeff Moore, Councilmember, City of Longmont

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A Woman's Work	Longmont Community Foundation
Adams Bank	Longmont Council for the Arts
Amgen	Longmont Downtown Development Authority
Blackfox Training Institute	Longmont Entrepreneurial Network
Boulder County	Longmont Housing Authority
CBRE	Longmont Power & Communications

## ADVANCE LONGMONT – REPORT 3: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

City of Longmont Councilmembers  
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Communications Concepts  
CP&M  
Digital Globe  
GE  
Gibraltar Business Appraisals  
Guarantee Bank  
FirstBank of Longmont  
Front Range Community College  
Frontier Companies  
Holland & Hart  
Instant Imprints  
Intel Corporation  
Intrado  
KW 1<sup>st</sup> Realty  
Latino Task Force of Boulder County  
Left Hand Brewing  
Life Bridge Church  
Longmont Area Economic Council  
Longmont Association of Realtors  
Longmont Chamber of Commerce

Longmont Senior Center  
Longmont Times-Call  
Longmont United Hospital  
Marriott of Longmont  
Metro Denver EDC  
Micron Technology  
OnCore Manufacturing  
OUR Center  
Praxis Group  
Pinetree Peripherals  
Prudential RM Realtors  
RE/MAX  
Seagate Technology  
Small Business Development Center  
St. Vrain Manufacturing  
St. Vrain Valley School District  
Sun Construction  
Tinker Mill  
Vapor Technologies  
Visit Longmont  
Xcel Energy  
Xilinx

## About the Project

*Advance Longmont* is a target industry analysis and economic development strategy that includes four phases of development:

### *Phase 1: Market Assessment*

After initial project set-up, the Market Assessment examined Longmont's current competitive position, assets, and opportunities. This phase included a review of recent studies and data on the local economy, stakeholder input sessions engaging Longmont's leaders, businesses, and an in-depth analysis of relevant economic and demographic data. The findings of the evaluation are contained in a SWOT assessment that highlights challenges and opportunities presented in the community and an organizational assessment of the area's economic development efforts.

### *Phase 2: Target Industry Analysis*

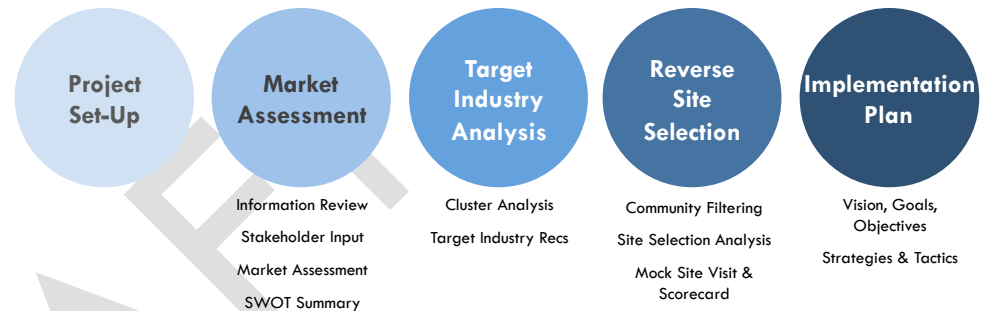
Building on the research conducted in the Market Assessment, the Target Industry Analysis evaluated the performance of Longmont's current industry and occupational base as related to national industry trends and site selection needs. This process helped determine appropriate target industry audiences for Longmont's economic development efforts.

### *Phase 3: Reverse Site Selection*

In Phase 3, the consulting team conducted an objective Reverse Site Selection assessment of Longmont. This process tested the target industries recommended in Phase 2, evaluating Longmont's competitiveness, and making recommendations on target adjustments and local product improvements.

### *Phase 4: Implementation Plan*

This report, the Implementation Plan for Longmont, articulates Longmont's vision for the future and a clear, step-by-step roadmap for achieving this vision. The Plan addresses and aligns a variety of issues, including recruitment, retention, workforce, physical infrastructure, quality of life, marketing, and more. It concludes with a timeline, estimated budget, resource requirements, task assignments for lead agencies and partners, and performance measurements.



## Introduction

Longmont is uniquely positioned at the **intersection of high technology and traditional manufacturing.**

With deep roots in agriculture, manufacturing and high tech, Longmont has grown as a residential destination with a welcoming nature, vibrant outdoor lifestyle, and a do-it-yourself attitude. The city's publically owned utility offers some of the most affordable and reliable service in the state, and residents recently voted to continue expansion of the public, fiber optic broadband network, a priceless asset for businesses and residents alike. Geographically located between two major research universities, Longmont draws from a broad pool of talent, including manufacturing workers and software engineers. **Longmont offers a joining of affordability, infrastructure, workforce, education, and quality of life that is rare and increasingly sought in the modern economy.**

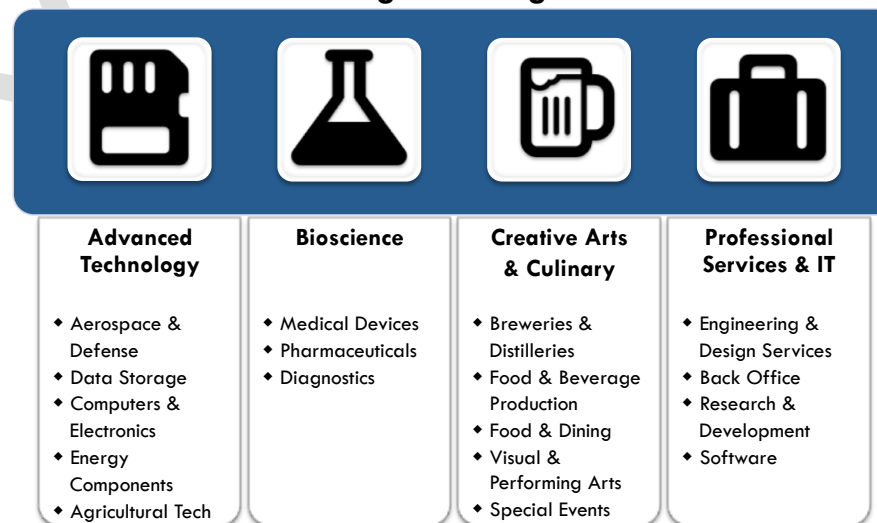
*“Longmont is where ideas become products.”*

Longmont is also a community in flux. Last year, just as employment started recovering from the recent recession, one of Longmont's largest primary employers, DigitalGlobe, announced its relocation outside of the city. Weeks later, devastating floods rocked the community, destroying homes and infrastructure. These events were an unpleasant way to wrap up the year but also present a unique opportunity for the city to revisit its goals and objectives and catalyze efforts to more effectively direct growth and redevelopment.

Towards this end, the City hired Avalanche Consulting to assist with development of a new, targeted economic development strategic plan. **This strategy will assist Longmont in recruiting and retaining quality businesses, improving the local business climate, increasing entrepreneurial opportunities, and optimizing the organizational effectiveness of local economic development efforts.**

The previous reports, the **Market Assessment** and **Target Industry Analysis**, looked at Longmont with a critical eye. They identified competitive strengths and challenges in the city as well as a range of promising opportunities in Longmont's target industries - **Advanced Technology, Bioscience, Creative Arts & Culinary, and Professional Services & IT**. Niche sectors are identified within each of these industries, along with marketing points outlining the competitive assets supporting each sector in Longmont.

### Advance Longmont Target Industries



Some opportunities are immediate, building on Longmont’s existing infrastructure, workforce, and industry clusters. Others are longer-term, requiring coordinated asset building and marketing throughout the community. But they all reflect Longmont’s vision and leverage the community’s unique strengths.

There will be challenges ahead in this process, but the key will be turning obstacles into assets. Limited budgets may force a community to be creative and efficient. For example, unused properties can be transformed into unique entrepreneurial spaces. A large Latino workforce may attract a firm with sales and distribution to Spanish-speaking markets. It is essential to understand the compilation of qualities that make Longmont different than other communities and turn those into opportunities.

The fight to build jobs and a strong community is not won by being the same as everybody else. It is won through supporting and marketing the features that make Longmont a unique place along the Front Range and in the US. This will not be an easy or free process, but if Longmont is serious about building success, the City needs to invest time and effort in shaping that future.

This final report, the **Implementation Plan**, establishes a clear, step-by-step roadmap for achieving Advance Longmont’s economic development vision and growing target industries. The recommendations are organized around six primary topics: **Marketing, Business Climate, Education & Workforce, Entrepreneurship & Innovation, Infrastructure, and Quality of Life**. They also include specific recommendations and tasks for supporting Vance Brand Municipal Airport.

The report first summarizes goals for each topic area, recommendations for achieving these goals, and metrics to measure success. The next section discusses detailed strategy and tactics to support each recommendation along with case studies and best practices. The report concludes with the Implementation Plan, which discusses organization and overall economic development metrics and includes tables for tracking the accomplishment of tasks over the next five years.

### Primary Findings

The recommendations in each topic area cover a range of issues and organizations but focus in on six primary needs:

- **Marketing:** Many people – both outside and inside of Longmont – are unaware of the city’s diverse and highly competitive assets. While some recommendations focus on improving local economic development offerings and opportunities, raising internal and external awareness of these opportunities will be fundamental to Longmont’s economic development success. Marketing messages also must be consistent across organizations to ensure the efforts of Visit Longmont, the LAEC, the DDA, and other support an overall vision.



- **Business Climate:** Longmont is recognized by regional and state leaders as one of the most business friendly cities in Colorado. City leaders welcome business and have invested in programs and policies to encourage growth. However, some segments of the population and business community remain fragmented and disconnected from leadership. The City and other organizations must work to remain supportive and flexible to business needs and inclusive of all residents and businesses, including the large Latino population.
- **Education & Workforce:** Longmont has a rapidly improving and uniquely STEM-oriented school system, a highly skilled workforce in many areas, particularly IT and manufacturing, and an effective community college that works with employers. The City faces some challenges recruiting and retaining younger, well-educated professionals. Recommendations focus on ways to enhance the existing workforce training system and create a lifestyle that appeals to younger, college-educated professionals.
- **Entrepreneurship & Innovation:** Longmont has a wealth of entrepreneurial assets, from a fiber optic broadband to a high concentration of inventors living in the city. These assets need to be marketed to the world, particularly startup companies in Boulder, Fort Collins, and other cities across the Front Range. With the proper support and building stock, target industry companies could thrive in Longmont.
- **Infrastructure:** Although on the cutting edge of some infrastructure development, including a locally-owned, affordable utility and expanding fiber optic broadband network, Longmont's existing building offerings are not all competitive for target industry needs. Along with private landowners and real estate developers, the City must work to increase the availability of competitive buildings and continue to redevelop and improve Downtown Longmont and other areas. Redevelopment of existing properties into modern space for business and residents should be emphasized.
- **Quality of Life:** The Longmont lifestyle is what draws new residents to the area and retains talent. The city is home to numerous art organizations, nationally renowned brewers, a budding restaurant scene, beautiful trails, and numerous other quality of life assets. Despite all this success, Longmont has tremendous opportunities to improve building façades, redevelop aging properties, encourage the growth of sports and entertainment options, and invest in other amenities such as the St. Vrain River corridor and trails that will help the area compete for top notch talent.

### Priorities

Of the many goals and tactics offered in this Strategy, several stand out as immediate economic development priorities for Advance Longmont:

- **Marketing & Branding** – Getting the word out regarding Longmont’s existing economic development assets is the highest priority. As the City begins enhancing its business infrastructure, a marketing campaign will let local businesses and outside audiences know about the significant existing competitive advantages to doing business in Longmont. As soon as this Strategy is complete, Steering Committee members, LAEC board members, City staff, and others can begin crafting a marketing plan of action.
- **Building Inventory** – Despite many advantages, Longmont currently has a shortage of the competitive modern office, commercial, and industrial space desired by businesses. Numerous businesses across the Front Range are looking for locations to expand and grow. Longmont needs to immediately begin work to identify, redevelop and construct the competitive buildings necessary to capture these opportunities.
- **Redevelopment** – Longmont has many unique physical assets that can accelerate economic development and build a unique brand identity. These assets include the St. Vrain River Corridor, former Butterball plant, sugar plant, downtown Main Street, and Boulder County Fairgrounds. They all individually present significant opportunities and, if redeveloped in conjunction with a new comprehensive plan, have the potential to be game changers.
- **Entrepreneurship** – Longmont is staged to be a regional center for entrepreneurship and innovation but must begin work to capture more second stage manufacturing and other technology companies from Front Range universities. Create incubator and maker space that these businesses need while telling them about the significant local opportunities for startups.

### Implementing the Strategy

The actions recommended in this report are the next steps down the long and ever changing road of economic development. As with a business, new conditions, models, and competition will require flexible thinking and adapting of strategies in the future.

These tactics will also require a community-wide effort. The strategy does not make recommendations just for the City and the LAEC. Successful implementation will involve the entire community, from private citizens and businesses to Visit Longmont and the DDA. Anybody with an interest in Longmont’s future can contribute to the success of this plan and all are encouraged to get involved.

In the months ahead, it is critical to transition the momentum of the planning process into actions. Following adoption of the Advance Longmont strategy by the City and LAEC, members of the Steering Committee should present the final strategy to organizations that will be involved in implementation. Additionally, the Steering Committee could transition into an Implementation Committee that oversees activities recommended in this plan. Working Groups should form around the major topics of the strategy, with each comprised of

representatives from the organizations taking action. Working Groups should report progress back to the Implementation Committee on a regular basis.

The City of Longmont and LAEC also face some organizational decisions. The **Organizational Assessment** makes recommendations regarding restructuring the City and LAEC's economic development functions. These recommendations apply national best practices in economic development operations to Longmont's needs and capacities. The potential changes are intended to make day-to-day economic development efforts more effective in Longmont, while retaining and enhancing the support provided by current programs.

Lastly, it is important to remember that this is a living document and must be updated as needed to stay relevant. The Implementation Tables at the end of the report provide a map of all recommendations and tactics. They can be referred to during LAEC board decisions and City Council meeting and integrated into staff performance plans. Once a year, metrics should be updated and integrated into a scorecard to quantify and measure progress. Tactics should also be updated as needed while maintaining the goals, target industries, and major strategies that act as a foundation for this economic development initiative.

## Economic Development Goals and Recommendations

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This section describes Longmont’s goals and top-level recommendations for enhancing overall economic development competitiveness. Topics include Marketing, Business Climate, Education and Workforce, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Infrastructure, and Quality of Life.

Following extensive meetings, interviews, focus groups, and analyses within Longmont, a vision for economic development in Longmont began to emerge. This vision reflects both existing realities and aspirations within the community and is important to bear in mind while developing strategies and programs in Longmont.

### ***Longmont’s Economic Development Vision***

***Sitting at the intersection of high-technology and manufacturing, Longmont exemplifies the best of the Front Range, offering a unique combination of infrastructure, high quality of life, skilled workforce, and business friendly climate while remaining affordable and welcoming.***

All goals and recommendations are supportive of the overall vision for economic development and work to enhance Longmont’s competitive position and community strengths.

## Marketing

### **Goal 1.0: Longmont is recognized locally, nationally, and globally as a premier business location.**

Longmont has highly competitive assets in a number of economic development areas, but many external audiences, as well as local residents, are unaware of these strengths. The City and LAEC need to more aggressively market Longmont's competitive strengths, particularly to target audiences. Building a marketing campaign begins with internal marketing to ensure that local leaders and representatives understand the goals and objectives and overall economic development strategy. The City and LAEC must coordinate marketing efforts with local organizations such as Visit Longmont and the DDA while also taking advantage of larger regional efforts conducted by Metro Denver.

#### *Recommendations*

- Engage in stronger internal and external marketing initiatives.
- Boost active participation in Metro Denver and Northern Colorado marketing activities to build awareness of Longmont as a premier business location.

#### *Metrics*

- Increased frequency of social media postings by LAEC
- Increased number of social media followers
- Increased project leads and visits
- Increased traffic to the LAEC, City, and other Longmont organizational websites
- Increased number of referrals to LAEC website through search engines
- Increased number of media mentions

## Business Climate

### **Goal 2.0: Longmont has a premier business climate for its target industries.**

Longmont is generally regarded as one of the more business friendly cities on the Front Range, but some businesses and residents expressed concerns about regulatory, planning, and other business climate issues. To make sure that Longmont remains a competitive location for businesses and adaptable to changing needs, it is essential that the City establish clear channels for communication between businesses, residents, and leaders. City policies, such as LEGI, that help residents start businesses and succeed should be encouraged. Additionally, continued efforts should be made to make Longmont more inclusive of minorities and under-represented groups, notably the large Latino community.

#### *Recommendations*

- Review regulatory and permitting procedures for target industries.
- Continue to support small business development initiatives such as the Longmont Economic Gardening Initiative (LEGI).
- Invest in building inventory for target industries.
- Continue to provide outreach to minority populations.

#### *Metrics*

- Increased applications for new business licenses
- Increased job growth
- Increased corporate investment
- Increased participation in LEGI
- Creation of a business needs panel
- Updating of the comprehensive plan to include recommendations regarding codes and planning for business needs
- Increased Latino business participation in the Chamber of Commerce and other business forums

## Education & Workforce

### **Goal 3.0: Longmont is home to a diverse and talented workforce, including skilled manufacturing workers and well-educated young professionals.**

Longmont is a well-educated and diverse community, including a wide-range of skilled labor, from welders to data storage system engineers. Despite these strengths, many employers expressed challenges attracting younger, college-educated workers to Longmont, and others noted gaps between local training programs and their specific job needs. Longmont must take a multi-pronged approach to these concerns, working to train local residents to fill jobs and also attract talented individuals to live and work in the city. These strategies will both enhance the overall quality of life and ensure employers can find the talent they need into the future.

#### *Recommendations*

- Align education and training with target industry needs.
- Connect students to internship, apprenticeship, and mentoring programs.
- Increase lifestyle amenities that help industry retain and attract workers.
- Ensure a competitive supply of housing for workers.

#### *Metrics*

- Population growth among younger, college-educated residents
- Increased supply of competitive and diverse housing options
- Increased participation of students in internship and other employer-based skills development programs
- Increased retention of local high school and college graduates at jobs based in Longmont
- Increased number of social amenities and activities in Longmont

## Entrepreneurship & Innovation

### **Goal 4.0: Longmont is an ideal home for startups at all stages of development and recognized as a national center for innovation.**

Longmont has a wealth of inventors, entrepreneurs, researchers, and innovation assets, but many of them are currently disconnected and unrecognized outside the community. Competitive assets include the fiber optic broadband network, reliable and affordable electricity, relatively low real estate costs compared to Boulder and Denver, and a supportive business environment. Longmont needs to more effectively coordinate these assets and make media aware of success stories. This will raise awareness of Longmont's assets among Front Range businesses, especially those entering their second stage of growth. Additionally, Longmont should improve building inventory options to better serve the needs of these companies.

#### *Recommendations*

- Increase media attention on Longmont's innovation assets.
- Ensure that Longmont has buildings for startups and second stage companies.
- Improve the networking and connectivity between entrepreneurs, capital, and start up support organizations.
- Continue to expand maker spaces such as TinkerMill.

#### *Metrics*

- Increased number of startups and high-tech companies located in the city
- Increased investment in research and development activities
- Establishment of a centralized and coordinated entrepreneurial organization, whether through the LEN's networks or a newly formed organization
- Development of new buildings and incubators for entrepreneurs and innovators within the city



## Infrastructure

### **Goal 5.0: Longmont offers an appropriate mix of competitive real estate, buildings, and other infrastructure options for business in target industries and the needs of residents.**

Longmont has numerous competitive infrastructure assets, including the fiber optic broadband network, affordable and reliable power, and high-quality water. Despite availability of undeveloped real estate for industrial and other purposes, Longmont's existing building inventory is not fully competitive for attracting modern businesses in all targeted industries. The City and LAEC must do more to increase the availability of updated buildings for startups, office, and industrial users while also continuing the redevelopment of downtown and building amenities for residents.

#### *Recommendations*

- Evaluate Longmont's current supply and condition of office and industrial buildings. Contrast findings against needs of targets.
- Diligently advocate for keeping BLI zoning on property(s) adjacent to the Airport.
- Encourage the redevelopment and beautification of downtown, the river corridor, and other targeted areas such as the Butterball facility and sugar mill.
- Continue city investment in capital improvements in public buildings and facilities, transportation, trail systems, parks and recreation, telecommunications, and water.

#### *Metrics*

- Increased supply of competitive building options, particularly Class-A office, flexible industrial, and startup space
- Continued redevelopment of Downtown Longmont and other targeted areas, including beautification and new retail, residential, and other commercial tenants
- Effective redevelopment of the St. Vrain River Corridor

## Quality of Life

### **Goal 6.0: Longmont has a highly attractive quality of life and diverse community, with a thriving arts, culinary, and entertainment culture.**

Enhancing quality of life serves Longmont's residents but also enhances overall economic development by helping attract and retain businesses and talented workers, drawing in visitors, and improving the community's overall reputation. Longmont has a rich diversity of arts, culinary, and entertainment businesses and organizations, including the successful local breweries. The redevelopment of Downtown Longmont also enhances the local quality of life and provide a distinct destination for those visitors. Longmont must continue to encourage enhancement of local lifestyle amenities and support those organizations that serve the Creative Arts & Culinary target industry. Residents also expressed the need for continued retail development, particularly targeted, high-quality stores in clothing and other areas.

#### *Recommendations*

- Support and market arts, culinary, and entertainment community as a resource for residents and destination for visitors.
- Further strengthen and expand neighborhood identity.
- Invest in recreation and arts facilities, including upgrades to Boulder County Fairgrounds, additional arts venues, and potential construction of an indoor sports arena.

#### *Metrics*

- Creation of a centralized website for the arts and entertainment
- Continued development of the Longmont Arts and Entertainment District Plan
- Increased number of quality restaurants and retail options
- Increased marketing of Longmont's art, culinary, and entertainment culture

## Strategy Details and Tactics

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### Marketing

**Goal 1.0: Longmont is recognized locally, nationally, and globally as a premier business location.**

**1.1 Engage in stronger internal and external marketing initiatives.**

TACTIC: Share the results of Advance Longmont with the larger community.

- Provide steering committee members, City representatives, LAEC board members, and business leaders with a presentation and speaking points that they can use to share this strategy with their networks.
- Host an Advance Longmont Summit to unveil this strategy to attendees and train the community on implementation.
- Post this report on the City and LAEC websites.
- Schedule an annual event for the LAEC and City to update the public on implementation progress.

TACTIC: Invest in an internal and external marketing plan.

- Longmont has highly competitive assets in a number of economic development areas but many external audiences (and local residents) are unaware of these advantages.
- Develop a comprehensive marketing campaign plan and updated marketing tools needed to implement the plan.
- Raise money, as needed, for LAEC to implement the marketing plan.

TACTIC: Establish the LAEC's website as the area's leading economic development marketing tool.

- Use the LAEC website as the area's primary information portal for economic development in Longmont. This includes providing interactive economic and demographic data, detailed sales messages for each target industry, success stories from local

businesses, building availability, business resources, incentive policies, and much more. This will serve as the primary first interface for prospective businesses, existing companies, and residents.

- Make sure Longmont's target industries and supportive assets are clearly articulated and visible on the website.
- Ensure that the website is compatible with mobile and tablet devices.
- Use all forms of communication, including social media and other media outlets to promote brand awareness. Consider maintaining a blog on the LAEC website that shares economic development wins, Longmont news stories, and other related content.

TACTIC: Coordinate marketing efforts with Visit Longmont, the DDA, and other city and regional organizations.

- Visit Longmont and the Longmont DDA have existing marketing materials and budgets. The LAEC and City should work with these organizations to ensure that marketing collateral reflects this strategy and the overall Longmont economic development objectives where they align.
- The City and LAEC should also work with the Longmont Sister Cities Association to ensure that economic development opportunities and partnerships are emphasized in relations with Longmont's sister cities of Chino, Japan and Ciudad Guzman, Mexico.
- Create a package of information for marketing Longmont's economic development opportunities at any local events that draw outside visitors to the city. Work with Visit Longmont, the DDA, and others to host more events.

## **1.2 Boost active participation in Metro Denver and Northern Colorado marketing activities to build awareness of Longmont as a premier business location.**

TACTIC: Host an annual Real Estate Tour of Longmont to expose the larger region's commercial realtors and developers to Longmont's many assets.

- Interviews with regional economic developers and real estate developers indicate that many are unaware of economic development opportunities in Longmont.
- Hosting an annual Real Estate Tour of Longmont will ensure that regional realtors and developers will be fully aware of emerging opportunities within Longmont and more



### **Best Practice: Internal Marketing**

Internal marketing is an essential component of economic development. Local leadership, employers, and residents are the strongest advocates for a community and must fully understand and support the economic development strategy. Organizations such as Charleston's Opportunity Next provide comprehensive websites to explain their strategy, coordinate local efforts, and build internal support.

<http://www.opportunity-next.com/>

### **Other Successful Models:**

[www.InnovateNortheastFlorida.com](http://www.InnovateNortheastFlorida.com)

[www.OneCommunityOneGoal.com](http://www.OneCommunityOneGoal.com)

likely to consider new development projects and showing clients existing buildings in the city.

TACTIC: Continue to actively participate in the Metro Denver EDC and Northern Colorado marketing activities.

- Regional economic development organizations provide significant resources and visibility to communities and are often the primary source of leads for sub-regional EDOs.
- Longmont needs to take advantage of this geographic positioning and use the international brand recognition of Boulder, Denver, the University of Colorado, and Colorado State University to draw the attention of businesses to the city and its unique combination of assets on the Front Range.
- The LAEC should provide marketing materials, success stories, and other selling points to Metro Denver and Northern Colorado to ensure that the city is high on their lists of viable regional locations when talking to prospects.
- LAEC and City representatives should regularly attend Metro Denver and Northern Colorado economic development and other networking events.

## Suggested Economic Development Marketing Tools

With a new website in place, the LAEC has taken the first step in creating its toolkit for promoting Longmont. The next steps are to craft a tactical action plan for marketing and invest in additional marketing tools that support the campaign.

### Branding

- Develop brand guidelines for applying the City's "You Belong in Longmont Colorado" to economic development audiences.
- Adopt the slogan as the LAEC's tagline, and incorporate design elements into the LAEC's logo.
- Incorporate the slogan and logo into economic development marketing tools.

### Digital Media

- The LAEC website needs to reflect Advance Longmont's target industries. Change "Key Industries" to "Target Industries" and adjust the list accordingly.
- Increase interactivity on the LAEC website, particularly in the Data + Demographics section.
- The LAEC's Facebook and LinkedIn pages are current. Consider adding a Twitter account that connects to LinkedIn. Consistently use a hashtag such as @LongmontBusiness to reinforce the economic development message.
- Invest in original photography and video footage that can be incorporated into LAEC marketing. Focus photos and videos on subjects that reinforce the community's target industry strengths. Showcase the community as an intersection of manufacturing and technology.

### Print

- Create a brochure and/or flyers that highlight Longmont's strengths for each of its target industries.

### Public Relations

- Create a media kit that provides story ideas and community information for use when meeting with local and regional media. Also include information on Longmont's entrepreneurship assets.

### Sales

- Develop an annual calendar of marketing missions and target industry events to attend in conjunction with Metro Denver.
- Develop a PowerPoint design template and PowerPoint presentations for use when presenting Longmont's assets to target industry companies and site consultants.

## Business Climate

### **Goal 2.0: Longmont has a premier business climate for its target industries.**

#### **2.1 Review regulatory and permitting procedures for target industries.**

TACTIC: Create a business needs working group to maintain communication with targeted business.

- Longmont is generally regarded as one of the more business friendly cities on the Front Range but needs to ensure a way to assess business needs and remain flexible to changing environments.
- Clear and effective channels of communication between businesses, residents, and leaders allow communities to understand whether policies are working and they can be improved.
- Creating a business needs working group that meets on regular basis to discuss regulatory and business climate topics will help Longmont start a discussion around strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations from this panel can help inform City Council, the LAEC, and others about the perception of Longmont's business climate and strategies to make Longmont an even more competitive business location.

TACTIC: Complete the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan update.

- The current Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2003 and is currently being updated.
- A city should update its comprehensive plan on a regular basis to ensure it matches current development patterns, business infrastructure and zoning needs, and the desires of residents.
- Alongside development of the St. Vrain River Corridor master plan and other city planning efforts, Longmont needs to revise and update the Comprehensive plan to match economic development objectives and needs of target industries.

TACTIC: Examine planning and development codes to ensure consistency with target industry needs and realities.

- Pay close attention to planning and development codes to ensure that they are consistent with the needs of local and targeted businesses.
- Zoning codes should protect key sites zoned BLI so that Longmont has potential to grow its commercial tax base.

TACTIC: Review and ensure the City's economic development incentive policy is comprehensive and transparent.

- When a city offers incentives for economic development, such as property tax credits, grants, or tax abatements, programs must be offered in a consistent and transparent manner for both business recruitment and existing business expansion.
- The City's incentive policy should explicitly describe the eligibility requirements for incentives such as job creation, salary levels, capital investment, target industry compatibility, and other metrics. Incentive policies should not differentiate between jobs created by existing or relocating businesses but instead focus on the overall economic impact of the project on the community.
- Longmont should consider offering incentives for some jobs that pay lower salaries if they meet other important qualifications such as being in targeted manufacturing sectors, offering strong career opportunities to lower income and less-educated Longmont residents, or are considered high-impact cluster building positions.

## **2.2 Continue to support small business development initiatives such as the Longmont Economic Gardening Initiative (LEGI).**

TACTIC: Ensure that Longmont has funding and staff in an organization dedicated to growing small businesses.

- LEGI and other small business development initiatives provide a foundation for economic growth in a community, offering basic services and advice to local businesses. This foundation is critical in a community like Longmont with many creative individuals interested in starting their own businesses.
- LEGI has received numerous national awards and is considered a point of pride within Longmont.
- If the City decides to realign some economic development functions in the LAEC, the Longmont Economic Gardening Initiative needs to be assured a home and funding into the future.

## **2.3 Continue to provide outreach to minority population.**

TACTIC: Build minority participation in the Chamber of Commerce and civic processes.

- Building the minority presence in the Longmont Chamber of Commerce is one way of working to ensure that the business community is inclusive and representative of the growing minority business community.
- Identify minority-owned businesses that have successfully bridged the gap between the traditional and minority business communities. Approach them about assisting with a plan for a more inclusive presence.

TACTIC: Provide a small-business resource that is bilingual and bicultural to help address the needs of minority-owned businesses.



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- Longmont has a large and rapidly growing minority community. Minority groups such as Latinos remain largely separate from the traditional Longmont business community. Many minority business-owners also face challenges accessing business and other services due to language barriers.
- By providing a small-business resource that is multilingual and multicultural, minority business-owners will have increased access to resources that may help their businesses flourish. It will also demonstrate the sincerity of the City and traditional business community's efforts to reach out and be more inclusive of the minority community.

DRAFT

## Education & Workforce

**Goal 3.0: Longmont is home to a diverse and talented workforce, including skilled manufacturing workers and well-educated young professionals.**

### 3.1 Align education and training with target industry needs.

TACTIC: Continue expanding collaborative efforts and coordination between the St. Vrain Valley School District, Front Range Community College, and other educational institutions.

- The LAEC should participate more actively in the Chamber's Education working group, which should be composed of representatives from the St. Vrain Valley School District, Front Range Community College, Work Force Development, local employers, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Charge the Chamber's Education working group with quantifying gaps between current education / training throughput and the forecasted needs of employers. Refer to these findings when making decisions about education / training programs. (See sidebar example.)
- The St. Vrain Valley School District and private schools are already building successful career programs, but more can be done to share information about the programs with employers and residents.
- By formalizing discussions in a regularly convened forum, Longmont employers and stakeholders will have a clear channel for discussing their concerns and opportunities.

### 3.2 Connect students to internship, apprenticeship, and mentoring programs.

TACTIC: Continue to host career fairs, networking events, talks, and other avenues to connect employers to students and prospective employees.

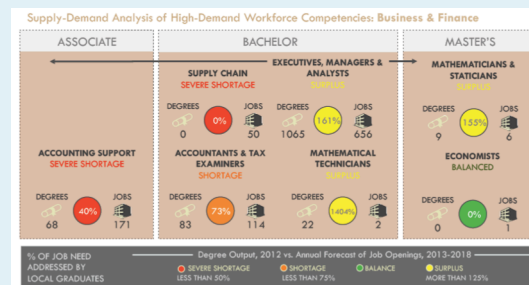
- Career fairs and other networking events provide opportunities for local employers to connect with potential employees that are already in the community.

#### Charleston Regional Chamber Degrees of Change

In 2013-2014, the Charleston South Carolina Chamber of Commerce commenced a talent gap study to identify the differences between the degrees local educational institutions are producing versus the forecasted occupational demand of its target industries.

The analysis quantified gaps in training for engineering and IT professionals, among other fields.

The results have been shared with educators and legislators, who are adjusting programming to fill in gaps and scale back resources to areas overproducing other skill sets. Results are also being shared with job seekers so that they may make more informed decisions about their career choices.



<https://www.charlestonchamber.net/degrees-of-change/>

They make residents aware of local opportunities that they may otherwise have overlooked due to limited advertising and lack of connectivity.

### **3.3 Raise awareness of career opportunities through technical tracks including STEM, specialized certificates, associate degrees, ESL, and other professional development programs.**

TACTIC: Market the availability and career opportunities of STEM programs and technical tracks.

- Many students and adults are unaware of the significant career opportunities available in STEM-related occupations.
- Marketing and education are two important ways to let young people know about the true work nature of modern, high tech manufacturing occupations. Making students aware of career opportunities and the salaries associated with each allows them to focus their studies on tracks that will lead to jobs in Longmont.
- Similar to STEM and Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs in middle and high schools, professional development and lifelong learning programs provide significant opportunities to adults but are frequently underutilized.
- Many adults are unaware of available funding and programs to assist with professional development, retraining for new careers, and other lifelong learning.
- These programs have been shown to have tremendous benefits for individual careers as well as employers. They can be better marketed through radio, TV, print media, billboard, and other advertisements where funding is available.

TACTIC: Provide opportunities for upward mobility and ESL for Latino and underserved populations.

- A significant segment of Longmont's large Latino population is less well educated than the overall population, and many speak limited English. To ensure that this part of Longmont's workforce is able to take part in new job opportunities, ESL programs should be expanded and promoted.
- ESL and other targeted training programs may provide the basic educational steps that residents need in order to qualify for previously inaccessible job opportunities.

### **3.4 Develop social amenities that help retain and attract workers.**

TACTIC: Convene a group of professionals to discuss what Longmont can do to attract a diverse workforce.

- Longmont is a well-educated and diverse community, but many employers expressed challenges attracting younger, college-educated workers to live and work in the community.

- The Longmont Chamber of Commerce’s neXt Young Professionals group provides a strong foundation for starting this discussion. Young professionals are the best source of recommendations regarding their needs and can speak frankly to Longmont’s competitive strengths and weaknesses regarding talent attraction.
- The neXt group should be involved in visioning and planning for redevelopment of the St. Vrain River Corridor, former Butterball plant, and sugar plant.

### **3.5 Ensure that Longmont has a competitive supply of housing for workers of all levels.**

TACTIC: Review development codes and zoning to ensure that they allow for the construction of a competitive mix of housing.

- During interviews conducted for this Strategy, many employers in Longmont expressed difficulties attracting younger employees to move to Longmont due to the lack of diversity in the housing market.
- Similarly, employers expressed challenges in finding executive housing in Longmont.
- The City should ensure that codes and zoning allow for competitive construction of needed housing elements.
- Additionally, incentives and other funding programs should be explored to encourage construction of a diversity of competitive housing options, from condos to luxury homes within the city.

#### **Best Practice: Apprenticeship 2000**

Apprenticeship 2000 is North Carolina’s four-year program that combines classroom work and on-the-job training. Graduates end up with an associate’s degree in manufacturing technology, N.C. Department of Labor Apprenticeship Certification, and a guaranteed job with their training company that pays a \$34,000 minimum salary plus benefits. Their education and training is cost-free to them, plus apprentices earn a salary while they train. Participating companies are ensured well-trained employees with technical, soft and problem-solving skills. Additionally, companies have discovered that apprentice program graduates tend to be happier, more productive and less likely to turn over than other employees. During the last 17 years, Apprenticeship 2000 has graduated 116 students. Currently, 49 apprentices are enrolled in the four-year program.

*Source: Charlotte Regional Partnership*

## Entrepreneurship & Innovation

**Goal 4.0: Longmont is an ideal home for startups at all stages of development and recognized as a national center for innovation.**

### 4.1 Increase awareness of Longmont innovation assets.

TACTIC: Highlight the success of local businesses, investors, inventors, and startups in local news articles and marketing materials.

- In conjunction with Longmont’s overall economic development marketing strategy, the LAEC, LEN, and City should emphasize the city’s highly competitive entrepreneurial environment.
- Highlight success stories of local businesses and innovators in news articles, social media, the LAEC’s website, and in marketing materials.

TACTIC: Communicate entrepreneurial assets and successes to local and regional media.

- Longmont’s geographic position close to the University of Colorado, Colorado State University, strong business climate, and entrepreneurial assets make it a very competitive location for second stage businesses spinning out of nearby universities.
- Create a media kit focused on Longmont’s entrepreneurship assets, rankings, and success stories.
- Meet with editorial boards of regional news outlets to share information about Longmont’s entrepreneurship assets.

### 4.2 Ensure that Longmont has buildings for start-ups and second stage companies.

TACTIC: Work with the private sector to expand innovative office, lab, and other appropriate space for entrepreneurs and startup companies.

- Despite the many innovation assets in Longmont, the city lacks a dedicated building for entrepreneurs that includes a mix of creative space, labs, and offices in one location at competitive rates.
- Because funding is limited, the City should explore public-private partnerships to establish a co-working space for entrepreneurs, potentially using underutilized properties in downtown Longmont.
- Desirable office space with attractive amenities in general is a concern for many startups considering location in Longmont. The City should continue work with developers and property owners to improve and construct appropriate office space for startups.

*“Longmont and Boulder are anchors of a high tech corridor.”*

*-Advance Longmont  
Interview Participant*

- A centralized entrepreneurial organization will help determine the specific types of space that are in high demand in Longmont. These will likely include lab and manufacturing space in addition to traditional offices.

TACTIC: Adopt policies that make downtown Longmont a destination for entrepreneurs.

- In addition to appropriate buildings, many startup companies look for downtown locations near amenities such as restaurants, coffee shops, jogging and bike trails, and others.
- As redevelopment continues in downtown Longmont and along the river corridor, the City should consult entrepreneurs regarding their needs and desires.
- Incorporate space for entrepreneurs (e.g., under 5,000 SF) and second stage companies (e.g., 5,000-10,000 SF) in redevelopment projects.

#### **4.3 Improve the networking and connectivity between entrepreneurs, capital and start up support organizations.**

TACTIC: Support a centralized organization to help bring together diverse groups from regional universities, capital investors, entrepreneurs, leadership, and others to advance entrepreneurial development in Longmont.

- Although currently un-housed, the Longmont Entrepreneurial Network has traditionally served this function in the community.
- By revamping and rebranding in conjunction with this strategy, the LEN or a new entrepreneurial network would serve as the face for Longmont's entrepreneurial community.
- A centralized entrepreneurial organization would help bring together diverse groups and voices in the community, potentially including outside groups such as representatives from the University of Colorado and Colorado State University.
- By including locally successful inventors and investors, this organization would also be well suited to discuss ways Longmont can build the entrepreneurial community and make recommendations to the City.



#### **Best Practice: Chicago's 1871**

1871 is a co-working center for digital startups. Located in the famed Merchandise Mart, the 50,000-square-foot facility provides Chicago startups with affordable workspace and access to mentors, programming, educational resources, potential investors and a community of like-minded entrepreneurs.

#### **Other Successful Models:**

CoWorkJAX: [www.coworkJAX.com](http://www.coworkJAX.com)

CoCo: [www.cocomsp.com](http://www.cocomsp.com)

Gangplank: [www.gangplankhq.com](http://www.gangplankhq.com)

TACTIC: Establish regular communication with tech commercialization offices and other research departments at the University of Colorado and Colorado State University to ensure awareness of opportunities in Longmont.

- Many startups developed in either Boulder or Fort Collins would benefit from locating in Longmont, which in many areas offers more competitive infrastructure and opportunities.
- Longmont should ensure that technology commercialization offices, research departments, incubators, and other related organizations at both universities are aware of Longmont's entrepreneurial opportunities and communicate these to young inventors and startups where appropriate.
- Maintaining these connections and relationships are important for the long-term growth of Longmont and the universities' commercialization efforts.

TACTIC: Meet with local and external investors to build interest and excitement about opportunities in Longmont.

- The City and LAEC should meet with local and external investors and business leaders in the region to ensure that they are aware of entrepreneurial companies and opportunities in Longmont.
- Many investors just down the road from Longmont are unaware of opportunities in the city. By meeting with them to build interest and knowledge of Longmont's possibilities, more investors and businesses will look to Longmont both as a destination for their capital and a potential home for their startup companies.

#### **4.4 Continue to expand maker spaces such as TinkerMill.**

TACTIC: Support development of maker facilities for manufacturing entrepreneurs.

- Longmont is home to a rare combination of assets in both high tech and manufacturing. This strength is demonstrated in the relatively high concentration of inventors that live in the city and the recent success of the Tinkermill.
- Where possible, the city should support the development of collaborative maker spaces for entrepreneurs that require lab and other specialized facilities for manufacturing and testing purposes.

TACTIC: Talk to local brewers, distilleries and restaurateurs about possibilities for kitchen co-working space and beverage incubators.

- Part of Longmont's appeal is its unique character, exemplified in the recent success of numerous homegrown breweries, distilleries and restaurants.

## ADVANCE LONGMONT – REPORT 3: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

- Meet with local brewers, distillers, restaurateurs, and aspiring entrepreneurs to discuss whether they would benefit from kitchen co-working spaces or brewery incubators and what these might look like.
- If a need is identified and affordable, the City should work with private developers to build the support infrastructure for entrepreneurship in this target industry.
- Few cities are working in non-traditional entrepreneurial areas such as this, and it could potentially provide another incentive for locating and developing the Creative Arts & Culinary industry in Longmont.



### Best Practice: Artspace Loveland – Feed & Grain

Artspace, a national art infrastructure organization, partnered with the City of Loveland to preserve the historic Feed & Grain Building. They have transformed the historic building into a place for creative businesses, artist studios, and community space. In addition, they have plans to construct a 30-unit affordable live-work space for artists and their families in an adjacent historical building. The entire project will be completed at an estimated cost of \$8.9 million.

Source: Artspace 2014



## Infrastructure

**Goal 5.0: Longmont offers a competitive mix of competitive real estate, buildings, and infrastructure for target industry businesses and residents.**

**5.1 Evaluate Longmont's current supply and condition of office and industrial buildings. Contrast findings against needs of targets.**

TACTIC: Hire a site selection or engineering firm to assess suitability and availability of local buildings for target industries and make recommendations for improvements in Longmont's building inventory.

- During interviews conducted for this strategy, businesses, public officials and real estate representatives expressed concerns about the availability of modern, competitive Class-A office space, industrial, and other building types in Longmont. However, the exact nature of the building shortage has not been quantified.
- By hiring an expert to assess the local building inventory, the LAEC, City, property owners, and local developers will develop a mutual baseline understanding of exactly what buildings are available locally, their suitability for target industries, and the specific upgrades necessary to make local building stock more competitive.
- Host a real estate roundtable with public and private sector representatives. During the roundtable, discuss the results of the building inventory study and ways to fill gaps in real estate inventory.
- The City should explore loans, grants, or other programs that incent upgrades to existing buildings to meet demand.



**Best Practice: TechShop**

Begun in 2006, TechShop is a national maker space company that operates facilities in cities across the country. TechShop supports local creative communities by providing tools, software, space, classes, and expert staff. TechShop has locations in nine cities across the country, including San Francisco, Los Angeles, Austin, Pittsburgh, and Washington DC.

Each TechShop facilities offers laser cutters; plastic and electronic labs; machine, wood, and metal working shops; welding equipment; design software; instruction courses; events; and much more.

Classes are open to any interested parties, and individuals can attend for monthly or annual fees that, depending on the level, also allow regular use of the shop's facilities.

Learn more at:  
<http://techshop.ws>

## 5.2 Encourage the redevelopment and beautification of downtown, the river corridor, and other targeted areas such as the Butterball facility and sugar mill.

TACTIC: Ensure that the updated comprehensive plan, St. Vrain River Corridor plan, and other plans and regulations encourage and allow for mixed-uses and align with economic development goals.

- In recent years, downtown Longmont has experienced a surge of redevelopment, with many new restaurants, shops, and other amenities opening. The City must work closely with the DDA to ensure that they have appropriate support.
- Continued redevelopment of downtown, the flood-devastated river corridor, and other areas will require public involvement. This involvement includes setting a clear vision for redevelopment through participating in the St. Vrain River Corridor planning process and providing input on the Longmont Area Comprehensive Plan.
- Create a volunteer program that encourages residents to participate in the beautification process.
- Invest in signage that communicates the results of the St. Vrain River Corridor plan and information about other planned redevelopment project. Post signs downtown and around project sites to inform residents that progress is underway.

TACTIC: Explore desirability and feasibility of offering beautification and improvement incentives, grants, and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for property owners in targeted areas.

- Many communities utilize public incentives to encourage beautification and improvement of existing properties, particularly in downtown environments.
- These programs could include tax breaks, small-scale improvement grants and loans, and Tax Increment Financing programs for redevelopment conducted in targeted areas.
- These types of incentives may serve to bridge the gap between desired redevelopment of properties and the funding available to property owners.



### Best Practice: Torpedo Factory Art Center – Alexandria, Virginia

Built in 1918, the US Naval Torpedo Station was an active torpedo factory for nearly thirty years until being decommissioned into a government storage facility for another twenty.

The City of Alexandria bought the complex in 1969 with plans to convert the buildings into studio space for artists. After five years of planning and months of cleanup and conversion, the Torpedo Factory Art Center opened to the public in 1974. Further renovations in the 1980s modernized the facility and tied into the city's waterfront redevelopment. Today, the Torpedo Factory Art Center houses over 100 artists and studios.

*"There is a lack of leadership and a coherent voice around Longmont's real estate needs."*

Source: Torpedo Factory Art Center 2014

**- Advance Longmont Interview Participant**

TACTIC: The City and LAEC should continue discussions with businesses and developers interested in redevelopment of the Butterball plant, sugar mill, and other large sites.

- The former Butterball plant, sugar mill, and other targeted redevelopment areas in Longmont present challenges and opportunities. These properties face significant redevelopment costs but also offer prime locations and unique infrastructure.
- The City and LAEC should continue working with private businesses and developers to find new tenants for these properties.
- Redevelopment of sites should be considered in the context of this economic development strategy, particularly where opportunities are available to find target industry businesses interested in the properties.

### **5.3 Continue city investment in capital improvements in public buildings and facilities, transportation, parks and recreation, telecommunications, and water.**

TACTIC: Continue to prioritize capital improvements according to the comprehensive plan and economic development priorities.

- Capital improvement funding should be directed to projects based on highest return on investment and community priorities identified by the comprehensive plan and economic development strategy.
- Longmont's hiking and bike trails, telecommunications, water supply, and other public assets are of the highest quality and help make the city an attractive location for residents and businesses. Ongoing improvements to these assets will add to Longmont's competitive business climate and quality of life.

TACTIC: Improve public transportation options for Longmont residents and workers.

- Longmont is a commuter community, with many residents working outside the city each day and many workers arriving for work from across the Front Range.
- Local and regional planners must look carefully at where workers are going and coming from and lobby to receive funding for public transportation and highway options connecting Longmont to these locations. In particular, connectivity to Boulder, Denver, and Fort Collins should be improved.
- I-25 is a major distribution pathway for manufacturers located in Longmont. The City should continue to work with regional and national partners to ensure that access to the Interstate is maintained and expanded.

### **Vance Brand Municipal Airport**

Vance Brand Municipal Airport plays an integral role in Longmont's mix of assets and overall economic development strategy.

Corporate jet traffic has increased in recent years, as corporations charter or fractionally own aircraft that they use for business travel, avoiding significant time lost in public airports and increasing business efficiency. Corporate jet access thus remains an important site selection factor for corporations that fly clients and executives on a regular basis. The airport's plan to add a 1,000-foot extension to the runway will allow for increased corporate traffic.

Elite Aviation, the airport's new Fixed-Based Operator (FBO) also has ambitious plans to build a new terminal and hangar. These improvements will significantly increase the airport's competitiveness for corporate jet traffic and other business.

Additionally, the airport provides essential physical infrastructure for aerospace and other manufacturing companies to conduct product development and testing activities. The recent UAV company relocation to the airport demonstrates the viability of this type of development. The runway expansion would also allow for larger-scale development, as it allows planes to carry heavier payloads and testing of larger aircraft and devices.

The airport's current master plan has identified strategies for advancing numerous goals, and the following tactics will help support these objectives in conjunction with this economic development initiative:

- Continue to coordinate work with the airport and City to convince the FAA and state that the 1,000-foot runway expansion is a high priority.
- Support the FBO's efforts to construct a new terminal building with appropriate, modern facilities.
- Market this property for industrial development to capitalize on airport economic development opportunities.
- Assist the airport in attracting non-aviation revenue ventures to the airport.
- Study long-term possibilities for a spaceport vertical launch facility at the airport.
- Explicitly include the airport as an essential asset in Longmont marketing materials.
- Consider applying for Foreign Trade Zone designation at the airport and surrounding properties.

## Quality of Life

**Goal 6.0: Longmont has a highly attractive quality of life and diverse community, with a thriving arts, culinary, and entertainment culture.**

### **6.1 Support and market arts, culinary, and entertainment community as a resource for residents and destination for visitors.**

TACTIC: Develop a centralized website for the arts and entertainment in Longmont, detailing the different organizations, programs, and opportunities in the city.

- Longmont has a rich diversity of arts and entertainment businesses and organizations, but they are largely lacking in coordination. The arts and entertainment community should build a website to showcase Longmont's diverse artistic and entertainment offerings in a central location.
- The Longmont DDA has an Arts & Entertainment section on their website that could be the starting point for a centralized city-wide website.

#### **Best Practice: The Importance of Community**

A 2010 Gallup study of 26 U.S. cities found that peoples' love and passion for their community could be an indicator of economic potential. According to the study, social offerings, openness and aesthetics are far more important than peoples' perceptions of the economy, jobs or basic services in creating a lasting emotional bond between people and their community.

- Social offerings, openness and aesthetics consistently rated the highest among 10 drivers of resident attachment, which also included: civic involvement, social capital, education, perception of the local economy, leadership, safety, emotional well-being and basic services.
- Communities with residents who are more attached to a place show stronger GDP growth even in tough economic times.
- People's perception of their community's performance in social offerings, openness and aesthetics has a greater impact on their emotional bonds to a place than their demographic characteristics.
- Perception of the local economy is not a leading reason residents create an emotional bond to a place.

*Source: Knight Foundation*

TACTIC: Support the Longmont Arts and Entertainment District Plan.

- Encourage local arts, culinary, and entertainment businesses to work closely with the DDA and participate in the Longmont Arts and Entertainment District Plan. This Plan is moving forward quickly and serves to highlight Longmont's arts assets and draw visitors into the community.
- Create a Creative Advisory Group composed of representatives from the arts, culinary, and entertainment community in Longmont. The Group should advise City policy on arts and culture as well as participate in marketing initiatives.

*“Without a appealing, higher end lifestyle amenities, we will lose workers to neighboring cities. We also have a hard time entertaining our executives in Longmont. We have to take them to Boulder and Denver for dinner.”*

*- Advance Longmont Interview Participant*

TACTIC: Continue to redevelop sites that offer the potential to become economic development and cultural anchors for Longmont.

- The redevelopment of the St. Vrain River Corridor presents numerous opportunities for residential and commercial development. Continue to invest in the St. Vrain River master planning processes and engage the community in visioning efforts.
- The former Butterball plant and sugar beet plant should also be prioritized for redevelopment.

*“For years, we’ve been trying to redevelop our downtown. It’s time that it happens.”*

*- Advance Longmont Interview Participant*

TACTIC: Expand craft beer, distillery, and artisan food culture in Longmont.

- Embrace craft beer, distilleries, and artisan food as targets of economic development efforts, including recruitment, new business startup, and expansion of existing businesses.
- Ensure that expanding brewery, distillery, and artisan food options are included in Longmont marketing materials from both LAEC and Visit Longmont.
- Increase promotion of the Colorado Beer Trail and Longmont's place on it.
- Work with area breweries, distilleries, food producers, and locally owned restaurants to include mention of their Longmont location in their marketing activities.

## 6.2 Further expand neighborhood identity development.

TACTIC: Continue to brand Longmont neighborhoods and invest in planning, signage, and other amenities that build neighborhood identities.



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- Continue grants and other programs that bolster neighborhood identities, revitalization, and community spirit.
- Encourage the creation of new neighborhoods and revitalization planning for each.
- Raise awareness of neighborhood programs and the benefits of forming neighborhood groups. Showcase successful examples such as Kensington and the Historic Eastside.
- These groups should meet regularly to discuss issues, plan neighborhood events, and advise the City on their needs and concerns.

### 6.3 Invest in recreation and arts facilities, including upgrades to Boulder County Fairgrounds, additional arts venues, and potential construction of an indoor sports arena.

TACTIC: Continue to invest in and promote cultural and recreational venues and events in the city.

- During interviews conducted for this Strategy, numerous Longmont residents cited the success of both the Senior Center and Rec Center. These assets should continue to be supported and expanded where possible.
- The DDA and City should work with local event organizers to find sponsors and volunteers and spread the word about events.
- Longmont should continue to host outdoor events, such as athletic competitions, which showcase the city's scenery and foodie culture. Focus on events that appeal to Longmont's desired workforce (e.g., cycling, running, craft beer and artisan food festivals)
- Events like these bring visitors to town to shop and dine and may even expose business executive and entrepreneurs to opportunities in the city.



#### Best Practice: Greenville, SC Downtown Revitalization

Like many American cities, Greenville's traditional downtown began to deteriorate, with many retail establishments closing their doors and moving to the suburbs. Downtown Greenville became a virtual ghost town with vacant buildings and few pedestrians.

Greenville attempted to address these concerns starting in the 1980s with a plan for redeveloping their riverfront and a small radius of downtown around the riverfront. This plan narrowed the street from four lanes to two, installed free, angled parking, trees, and new light fixtures, while creating parks and plazas.

Through a public-private partnership, the city built the Greenville Commons / Hyatt Regency convention hotel as an anchor to begin luring private investment and office construction to downtown. Continued partnerships and investment over the past two decades have brought numerous retailers, art centers, and other mixed-use development to the now thriving downtown.

Source: City of Greenville

- Longmont is a very active community, with numerous outdoor recreational assets. However, the city lacks a multi-purpose ice and sports arena. Hockey is a popular sport in the community, and an ice and sports arena would well-serve Longmont for skating and hockey purposes as well as hosting concerts and other events.
- Conduct a feasibility study to determine the economic potential of an ice and sports arena.

TACTIC: Examine redevelopment opportunities at the Boulder County Fairgrounds.

- The Boulder County Fairgrounds is a dated venue. With proper renovation, the Fairgrounds could be utilized for larger special events. These renovations would make Longmont an even more attractive community, both for local residents and visitors.
- Because the Fairgrounds are a county facility, the City, LAEC, and Visit Longmont need to work with the Boulder County Commissioners to find motivation and funding to improve the facility. Demonstrating the economic development value of a redeveloped Boulder County Fairgrounds as an asset for residents and visitor attraction will be critical to this process.

**“My son is active in a hockey league. Without an ice rink in Longmont, I have to drive for hours each week to get him to his games. The distance is so far that my husband and I have considered moving out of Longmont so that we may be closer to a rink.”**

**- Advance Longmont  
Interview Participant**



# Implementation Plan

This final section of this report provides an Implementation Plan for the strategy. The consulting team includes an organizational structure for coordinating implementation, metrics for tracking performance, and a table containing all actionable items, timeframes, and responsibilities for each.

## Implementation Organization

The Advance Longmont strategy is designed to ensure an approach to economic development that coordinates all organizations and individuals within the city, both public and private. It calls on many organizations in Longmont to assist with implementation, not just the City government and the LAEC.

### First Steps

1. To begin, **share this draft strategy** with LAEC board members, City Counselors, and board members of Longmont organizations that will have a role in implementing the recommendations and tactics.
2. **Solicit feedback** from those individuals and share feedback with the consulting team so that they can finalize the strategy.
3. Host an **implementation workshop** with all parties who have a role in implementing this strategy.
4. Create a **toolkit of materials that Steering Committee members and other community leaders can use to share this Strategy** with others in the community. The toolkit could contain a (1) PowerPoint presentation highlighting target industries, goals, and recommendations, (2) a one-page flyer summarizing the Strategy, and (3) a copy of the Strategy. A project implementation website could also be developed to keep the Strategy online and allow the community to track implementation.

### Steps to Implementation:

- ✓ Create a Strategy communications toolkit.
- ✓ Meet with implementers to discuss their roles.
- ✓ Share the Strategy with other community groups.
- ✓ Establish an Implementation Committee and working groups.
- ✓ Engage City/LAEC staff in providing support to the Committee.
- ✓ Schedule quarterly meetings for working groups to report progress.
- ✓ Calculate metrics and update the implementation tables on an annual basis.
- ✓ Consider Organizational Assessment recommendations and potential realignment of City and LAEC responsibilities.

Spend two to three months meeting with all organizations listed in the “responsibility” column of the implementation tables. Help them understand the importance of the Strategy and ask them to adopt recommendations related to their organizations in their own organizational plans.

### Implementation Committee

We recommend that the City of Longmont and LAEC establish an Economic Development Strategic Planning **Implementation Committee** consisting of one representative from each organization listed in the “responsibility” box of the tables. This Committee should be charged with monitoring progress. In 2014/2015, the Committee should meet on a quarterly basis. It can scale back meeting frequency basis as recommendations are completed.

Establish two **Co-Chair** positions for the Implementation Committee, preferably from the private sector. The Chairs may rotate on an annual or bi-annual basis.

### Working Groups

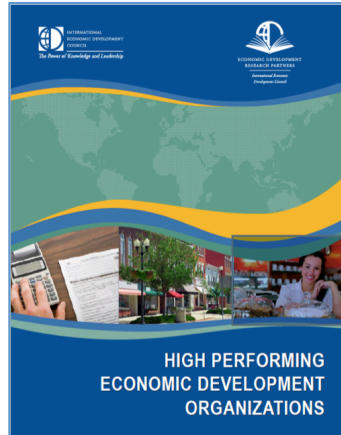
Within the Implementation Committee, **working groups** should form around each major topic in the report: Education and Workforce, Business Climate, Infrastructure, Quality of Life, and Marketing. Working groups will be comprised of representatives from each organization listed in the “responsibility” column of the worksheet. Working groups can meet as frequently as needed between Implementation Committee meetings to establish a plan for addressing their recommendations and take action. During each Implementation Committee meeting, working groups will be asked to report on progress to the larger group. Each working group can be assigned a chairperson to coordinate meetings and keep the agenda on track.

### Keeping the Strategy Current

The Strategy is a living document. **On an annual basis, the Implementation Committee (and working groups) should update the Strategy** vis-a-vis the implementation tables. Cross-off recommendations that have been completed, adjust timelines and responsibilities as needed, update wording as needed, and eliminate recommendations that are no longer relevant. Calculate metrics and develop a scorecard to grade performance.

The LAEC and City will assist with facilitating the Implementation Committee meetings. Their role will be similar to the role played with the Advance Longmont Steering Committee – send meeting notices, identify a meeting location, handle meeting logistics, and distribute follow-up reports to committee members.

The City, LAEC, and other organizations involved with implementation can monitor progress by tracking the percent complete for each recommendation contained in the implementation tables contained in the following pages. Other metrics are provided in the following section.



### Best Practice: 9 Traits of Highly Effective Economic Development Initiatives

1. Are driven by their customer
2. Operate with a strong strategy
3. Measure results and adjust
4. Showcase adaptability, entrepreneurialism, risk taking
5. Build strong alliances and networks
6. 50%+ private sector involvement
7. Have passionate, innovative leaders
8. Represent a diversity of perspectives
9. Clear and consistent direction

Source: IEDC 2011

### Structure

Lastly, the City should consider the findings of the Organizational Assessment and evaluate the staff and responsibility balance between the City and the LAEC. The City and LAEC should identify the best balance of activities to coordinate the implementation of this Strategy and performing research, business development, prospect management, and other day-to-day economic development operations. There may be a need for adjusting staff responsibilities and roles between the two organizations to provide more dedicated time to overseeing implementation progress and regular activities. Incorporating the Strategy's goals and tactics into staff performance reviews will also be helpful.

## Metrics

Metrics provide a means of measuring the success of an economic development strategic plan and setting goals to work towards. It is difficult to perfectly quantify the success of an economic development strategy, as many factors influence a local economy, including the overall health of global markets, the operations of individual businesses, commodity prices, social media trends, and many more.

By setting goals and regularly measuring specific metrics, local leaders can observe trends and quantify the effects of local programs. The following suggested metrics provide guidance for monitoring the success of Longmont's economic development performance.

### Implementation Metrics

Tracking the implementation progress for each recommendation in this report is a metric in itself. By regularly checking recommendation progress to the implementation schedule, Longmont leadership can gauge the success of implementation and more effectively direct efforts. The Implementation Committee and working groups can regularly track implementation of the Strategy according to these tables schedule.

### General Economic Health Metrics

The Implementation Committee can effectively monitor the overall health of Longmont's economy by annually examining key statistics regarding the local economy:

- Rate of employment growth (overall and by target industry, see tables in Target Industry report)
- Rate of population growth
- Rate of wage and income growth
- Unemployment rate
- Percentage of population with higher educational attainment (e.g., associate degree or higher)
- Percentage of population aged 25 to 44 years
- Percentage of population living below the poverty line
- Tax revenue

### Economic Development Campaign Metrics

The economic development campaign should ultimately lead to increased prospect activity, new company growth, company expansions and business recruitment. The following metrics indicate that local policies, improvements and marketing activities are paying off:

- Number of new business licenses granted by City of Longmont

- Number of qualified leads
- Number of prospect visits
- Number of won projects
- Job growth rate by existing and new businesses
- Corporate investment

### Marketing Metrics

Marketing activity metrics are designed to monitor the effectiveness of marketing recommendations in this Strategy. If the recommendations are producing results, Longmont should expect to see increased activity in the following areas:

- Frequency of social media postings by LAEC
- Number of social media followers
- Frequency of hashtag (#) mentions of Longmont and economic development campaign
- The ratio of engagement activities (such as retweets, forwards, and likes) to the number of followers in each social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
- Number of visitors to LAEC and City economic development webpages
- Number of referrals to Longmont campaign website through search engines
- Average length of stay by visitors on the website
- Number of media mentions (television, radio, newspaper, news sites)
- Active list of rankings where Longmont appears
- Percentage of qualified leads that are generated through social media and websites

## Target Timing

The timing of target development approaches is an important consideration. Some targets are already well established locally and staged for immediate development in Longmont, while others are longer-term prospects that require further development of local competitive assets. Each target's potential is qualified as **immediate**, **mid-term**, or **long-term**:

### Immediate Opportunity:

- Longmont has adequate assets and industry presence to immediately begin pursuit of the target. Examples include the expansion of a strong existing sector, such as Data Storage, or ones that could flourish with simple improvements to Longmont's asset mix.

### Mid-Term Opportunity:

- These sectors are established in the community, with some companies, workforce programs, natural resources, or infrastructure strengths, and are forecast to grow. These opportunities have strong prospects, but Longmont lacks one or more critical assets necessary to be a highly competitive location today.

### Long-Term Opportunity:

- These sectors are forecast for strong growth and align with Longmont's goals but currently have a limited local presence. Longmont either lacks several critical assets necessary to compete or the sector is still emerging nationally. The Implementation Plan will recommend tactics to increase opportunities in these sectors in the future.

ADVANCE LONGMONT TARGET TIMING & APPROACH				
		Timing	Economic Development Approach	
ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY			Recruit	Retain
				Startup
Aerospace & Defense	Immediate	70%	20%	10%
Data Storage	Immediate	10%	80%	10%
Computers & Electronics	Immediate	40%	50%	10%
Energy Components	Mid-term	40%	40%	20%
Agricultural Technology	Mid-term	60%	10%	30%
BIOSCIENCE			Recruit	Retain
				Startup
Medical Devices	Immediate	60%	20%	20%
Pharmaceuticals	Immediate	20%	70%	10%
Diagnostics	Long-term	70%	0%	30%
CREATIVE ARTS & CULINARY			Recruit	Retain
				Startup
Breweries & Distilleries	Immediate	10%	50%	40%
Food & Beverage Production	Immediate	40%	40%	20%
Food & Dining	Immediate	10%	40%	50%
Visual & Performing Arts	Mid-term	10%	40%	50%
Special Events	Long-term	40%	20%	40%
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES & IT			Recruit	Retain
				Startup
Engineering & Design Services	Immediate	10%	60%	30%
Back Office	Mid-term	70%	20%	10%
Research & Development	Immediate	40%	50%	10%
Software	Immediate	30%	50%	20%

As seen in the table above, Longmont has many targets with immediate potential for development. Targets that are already well-established in Longmont and should be the focus of **immediate retention** strategies include:

- Data Storage
- Computers & Electronics
- Pharmaceuticals
- Breweries & Distilleries
- Food & Beverage Production
- Engineering & Design Services
- Research & Development
- Software

Other targets that Longmont currently has competitive strengths but should be the focus of **immediate attraction** strategies include:

- Aerospace & Defense
- Agricultural Technologies
- Medical Devices
- Food & Beverage Production

Some targets will require mid- or long-term development strategies, focused on building critical assets necessary for the industry, whether in workforce, building inventory, or another category. Important **mid- and long-term** strategic targets include:

- Energy Components
- Agricultural Technology
- Diagnostics
- Visual & Performing Arts
- Special Events
- Back Office

The arrangement of these targets based on timing and approach informs whether they are more of a focus for internal or external marketing initiatives, infrastructure improvement, or workforce education programs. All targets are important to Advance Longmont, but timing prioritization will help the LAEC and City identify those staged for immediate work and those requiring patience and continued strategic investment.

## Implementation Tables

The following pages contain a list of all actionable items in the Implementation Plan along with suggested time frames and task assignments.

The tables contain suggested timing for implementation, task responsibility, and budget when possible.

**NOTE: Tables will be added once consulting team receives input from the City, LAEC and other stakeholders.**

DRAFT